

## SAINT AGNES PARISH

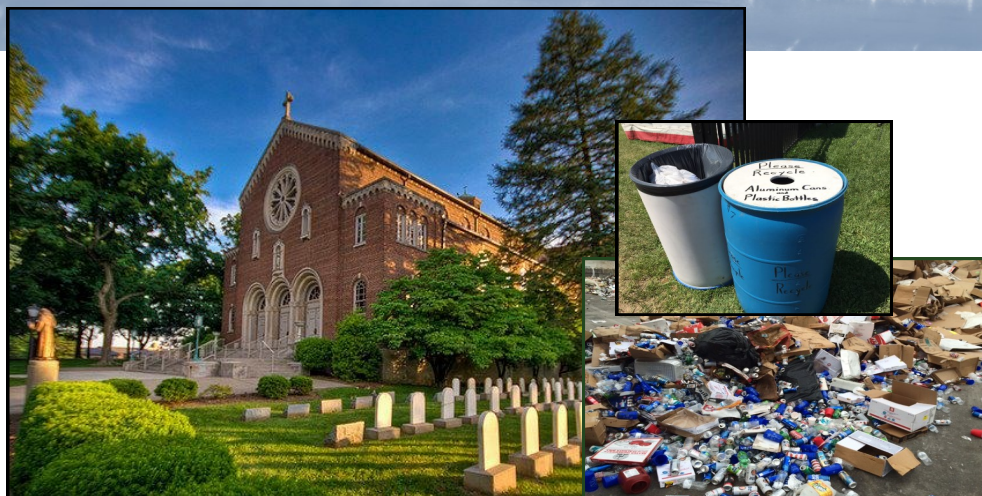
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*Several thousand people attend the Saint Agnes Parish carnival each year, leaving behind cans, bottles, cups and cardboard, which are recycled.*



Above Left: Saint Agnes Catholic Church Top Right: A recycling bin and garbage can are side by side. Bottom Right: Recyclables are collected at the church carnival.

Whenever large crowds of people gather to eat and drink, there will be trash and lots of it. So how do you deal with garbage in a responsible and environmentally friendly manner?

Every July since 1995, the Saint Agnes Catholic Church, on Newburg Road in Louisville's Highlands neighborhood, has hosted a two-day parish carnival on the church grounds as a fundraiser. This event is the single largest fundraiser that Saint Agnes undertakes each year, with proceeds supporting the school and parish campuses, ministries, programs and community outreach. Between 10,000–20,000 people attend the carnival, making it the largest parish carnival in the entire 24-county Archdiocese of Louisville.

The parishioners realized that an event the size of their carnival would generate a great deal of trash, and they wanted to minimize the environmental impact from thousands of beverage containers.

Corinne Greenberg, who is part of the leadership team that is responsible for organizing the Saint Agnes Parish Carnival, says, "At Saint Agnes, there are nearly 1,300 households registered and more than 270 of those households are families with children that attend the church's parochial school. Recycling is a well-established culture in our community."

Church members decided to handle trash from their annual carnival in the same way they dealt with it in their homes—recycle all the materials possible. Two church members, who also serve

## Key to Success

More can be accomplished when everyone works together toward a common goal.

on the carnival grounds crew, Laura and Ned Fitzgerald, launched the carnival's recycling efforts in 2006. Materials collected included beverage cans and bottles.

In 2007, Greenberg approached Saint Agnes' parishioners about joining KY EXCEL, Kentucky's voluntary environmental leadership program.

"Parishioners recycle at home, so I was applauded when I suggested the parish join KY EXCEL," says Greenberg. "We decided our KY EXCEL project would be recycling at the carnival."

The carnival features many areas to attract visitors, from booths to win handmade quilts in a raffle, a cake walk, play games, go on the many rides and to purchase beverages, snacks or a full dinner.

Each booth or location generates piles of waste, such as cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic cups and bottles. Usually, there are 10 Boy Scouts working trash and recycling detail. The scouts cover 18 two-hour work shifts over the two nights of the carnival. As a reward for the work they do, the boys receive wristbands that offer them free admission to enjoy all of the rides on Thursday night before the event begins on Friday.

There is a variety of foods available, such as fried chicken, pulled pork, brats,

fish, pizza and hamburgers, with several of them requiring cooking oil to prepare. Instead of disposing of the used cooking oil in the trash, it is recycled to be used for biodiesel fuel.

Since the parishioners are dedicated to being good environmental leaders, they don't stop with recycling trash. The parish also reuses the carnival equipment, such as tents, booths, tables and chairs, each year and loans tables and chairs to another church for its event later in the summer.

In 2016, carnival team members recycled 264 pounds of aluminum, 1,056 pounds of plastic, 440 pounds of cardboard and 25 gallons of used cooking oil. In comparison, after the 2009 carnival, 220 pounds of aluminum and 110 pounds of plastic were recycled. This is quite an increase in volume and in the type of items now being recycled.



Boy Scout volunteers empty trash and recycling bins.



Used cooking oil is recycled after the carnival.